

Public Health Committee,

The delivery of ABA services is crucial for many students in CT and beyond. It requires very specific study, training, and supervision to be successful and truly help kids. HB 5537 would permit SLPs to delivery a service that is not currently within their scope of practice, in an area in which they are not required to take any classes or fulfill any experience requirements. This bill passed into law would create a situation in which the quality of ABA services would vary greatly, a situation in which children would not be provided adequate services. While ABA includes includes instruction related to communication which many SLPs might be proficient in providing (dependent upon their specific training histories), ABA is much broader and includes tasks which do not typically involve an SLP. These include but are not limited to severe aggression, self-injury, stereotypies, social skills, adls, etc.

Rather than artificially expanding the SLP scope of practice, children are best served by combining the differing expertise of the BCBA and the SLP. HB 5537 would negatively impact children, families, BCBAs, School Psychologists, and others. Additionally, the expansion of SLPs scope of practice must first be reviewed in accordance with Public Act 11-209, An Act Concerning the Department of Health's Oversight Responsibilities Relating to Scope of Practice Determinations for Health Care Professionals. Please think about this carefully. BCBAs take great pride in their training, practice, and continuing education and every SLP I have spoken to about this has opposed it. How can their preparation be replaced by an artificial expansion of a scope of practice?

Families count on us to do the right thing. HB 5537 is not the right thing. Please think about this carefully. The trials and stresses families of children with developmental disabilities are significant and ongoing. We need to be up front and open about the services we are really qualified to provide them.

Thank you for your time. Please contact me with any questions.

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